## Pledge to Recommit to Full Implementation of the ADA and Accessible, Welcoming Faith Communities

## (Please feel free to adapt to your own congregation or faith tradition)

On July 26, 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure the civil rights of people with disabilities. This legislation established a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. On July 26, 2015, we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the signing of the ADA.

The ADA has expanded opportunities for Americans with disabilities by reducing barriers and changing perceptions, and increasing full participation in community life. However, the full promise of the ADA will only be reached if we remain committed to continue our efforts to fully implement the ADA.

Although religious organizations and the entities they control are exempt from some sections of the law, they, as institutions of faith, have always been governed by the mandates of love and justice. It is under this higher authority that many congregations and other religious entities are creating accessible and welcoming environments for people with disabilities. When barriers of architecture, communication and attitude are removed, justice and love prevails and people with disabilities become full participants in the celebrations and obligations of their faith.

On the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, I/we (name of leader or faith community) will celebrate and recognize the progress that has been made by reaffirming the principles of equality and inclusion and recommitting our efforts to build congregations and communities in which people with disabilities are full, contributing members and citizens.

NOW THEREFORE, I/we\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (name) do hereby reaffirm that I/we will continue to work toward full ADA compliance in our communities and toward accessible, welcoming congregations.

*Developed by the Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition (*[*IDAC*](http://www.aapd.com/what-we-do/interfaith/)*), a program of the American Association of People with Disabilities (*[*AAPD*](http://www.aapd.com/)*), in conjunction with the* [*ADA Legacy Project.*](http://www.adalegacy.com/) *Let us know how you’re using the pledge. Contact Curtis Ramsey-Lucas, Director of Interfaith Engagement, AAPD at* *cramsey-lucas@aapd.com* *or 202-521-4319.*